

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) celebrate the passage of historic health care legislation. The legislation provides health care coverage to 32 million more people in the U.S., and will reduce the deficit by over \$1.3 trillion over the next 20 years.

Rep. Michael Honda (CA-15), chair of CAPAC: “I am so proud that our caucus has supported and helped shaped this historic legislation. This bill will ensure access to quality and affordable care and will reduce our nation’s long-term costs. The bill also has strong provisions to improve the health of racial and ethnic minorities. Not only does it grant greater affordable access, tax credits to small businesses, but it also provides greater resources to the U.S. territories and includes strong data collection provisions that will help reduce racial and ethnic health disparities. These are astounding victories for which the Congressional Tri Caucus, constituted by the minority caucuses, have long championed. I commend President Obama, Speaker Pelosi, and Majority Leader Reid for their incredible leadership in this historic accomplishment.”

Increased access to affordable quality care will greatly affect the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. 52% Asians delay or forgo routine and preventative care due to costs. Among nonelderly uninsured AAPIs, 52 percent lack a usual source of care, compared to 46 percent of non-Hispanic Whites. The uninsured are also less likely to have been to a doctor’s office in the past year. AAPIs are more likely to have not had a visit to the doctor compared with non-Hispanic Whites (51% vs. 39%).

Senator Daniel K. Akaka (D-Hawaii): “We are one step closer to improving the nation’s health care system. This legislation expands access to health care coverage, improves the quality and availability of services, and attempts to slow increasing costs. When this bill becomes law, people with preexisting conditions will be able to get insurance, and unfair lifetime limits imposed by insurance companies will be prohibited.”

Rep. Madeleine Z. Bordallo (GU), chair of CAPAC’s Health Care Task Force: “This is an important bill for Guam and the U.S. territories because the health care reform package will have real, immediate, and lasting improvements on healthcare for all Americans including residents of the territories. It will reduce the federal deficit, provide greater support to Guam and the territories through our Medicaid program, control medical costs, extend coverage to over 95% of Americans, and improve the quality of care received by our citizens. The language in the reconciliation measure puts the territories on a path to eventually removing the caps on Medicaid and eventually providing for true parity with their fellow Americans. I commend President Obama, Speaker Pelosi, and Majority Leaders Hoyer and Reid for their leadership and commitment to including the territories in the final version of comprehensive health care reform.”

Rep. Eni Faleomavaega (AS), vice chair of CAPAC: “At its best, this bill is a step toward equality and justice for all Americans and, for this reason, I thank my colleagues for supporting this historic legislation and, most especially for working hand-in-hand with the Congressional Delegates’ to make certain that the Territories were included and that our concerns were addressed.”

Rep. Xavier Becerra (CA-31): “Yesterday we accomplished what one hundred years of congresses could not. We passed comprehensive health care reform that makes quality health care affordable for almost all Americans, and does so responsibly by driving down the federal budget deficit and strengthening Medicare. When the President signs our legislation into law, the worst practices of the insurance industry—from discrimination based on pre-existing conditions to dropping coverage when you get sick—will be a thing of the past.”

Rep. Judy Chu (CA-32): “Health disparities and barriers to effective health care persist among Asian Americans. Linguistic, cultural, and health coverage issues all hinder AAPI children and families from attaining the care they need. The health care reform bill passed last night will greatly benefit Asian Americans. It will provide health insurance to a full 95 percent of Americans; will prohibit insurance companies from discriminating against individuals because of preexisting conditions or gender, or from dropping their coverage if they suddenly become gravely ill; and will do so while at the same time reducing our federal deficit by a full \$1.3 trillion over the next 20 years. With yesterday’s House vote, we are just a few steps away from changing our health care system for the better and ensuring that America treats its people with the respect, dignity and compassion they deserve.”

Rep. Mazie Hirono (HI-02): “Last night, we took a stand for hard-working middle class families who deserve a better value for their health care dollar. We took a stand for better health care for America’s seniors. And we took a stand for those who have been denied insurance coverage because of a pre-existing condition or whose insurance is rescinded when they need it most.”

Rep. Doris Matsui (CA-05): “This Congress accomplished something monumental by passing historic health insurance reform legislation yesterday,” said Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-05.) “At its core, this bill is about expanding access to health care and putting American’s health before insurance companies’ profits. That is why we have fought so hard to deliver this reform for the American people.”

Rep. Robert C. Bobby Scott (VA-03): “These bills will provide security to those who have insurance – because 14,000 Americans will no longer lose their insurance everyday. And others will no longer have to watch their cost of insurance skyrocket every year. Future generations will look back at the votes we cast today, just as today we look back at the votes on Social Security and Medicare. Those future generations will see that we proudly voted in favor of health care for all.”

Rep. David Wu (OR-02): “When we look back 50 years from now, health care reform will stand beside Social Security, the GI Bill, and Medicare as a pillar of American progress and humane values. Under this legislation, 32 million more Americans will have health care coverage, and even more importantly, the more than 200 million Americans who already have insurance coverage will have unprecedented security and stability. After a long and heated debate, we passed legislation that will touch the lives of all Americans and make substantial improvements to our health care system. I was proud to support this health care reform legislation and stand with my colleagues as we made history.”

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The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) is comprised of Members of Congress of Asian and Pacific Islander descent and members who have a strong dedication to promoting the well-being of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Since 1994, CAPAC has been addressing the needs of the AAPI community in all areas of American life. For more information on CAPAC, please call (202) 225-2631 or visit <http://www.honda.house.gov/capac>.